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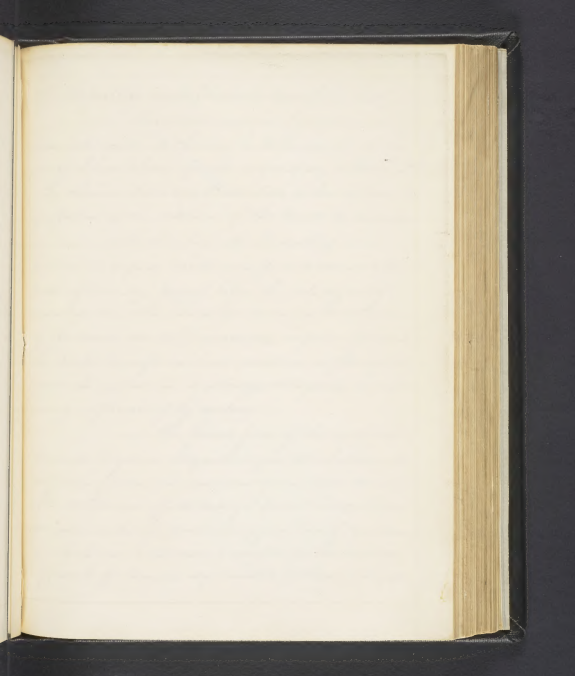
A Dissertation  
on  
Hepatitis  
By A. G. W. Roy  
of Virginia

Candidate for the Degree of M. D.  
In the University of Pennsylvania.

January 30<sup>th</sup> 1828.

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of Hepatitis or Inflammation of the liver

Hepatitis is divided by systematic writers into acute and chronic, the latter variety of the disease I have chosen for the subject of my dissertation.

By chronic Hepatitis I understand a slow inflammatory affection of the substance of the liver or its enveloping membranes or both. It is frequently the result of acute hepatitis improperly treated, or suffered to advance to far in its inflammatory progress before the salutary aid of medicine and other means for overcoming the violence of the disease are duly exercised, unfortunate indeed the prognosis for medical assistance is often neglected until the constitution is entirely destroyed by the undermining influence of the malady.

The present form of this complaint is slow in its progressive stages, the organ attacked may be suffering for months and even years under the ravages of its deleterious effects and yet present no very obvious external marks of disease, or aggravation of symptoms by which our attention is directed to the insidious approach of danger, any transient feelings of indisposi-

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tion are generally imputed by the patient to some improper or ungrounded cause, not for a moment suspecting the liver as being the source from whence all those peculiar sensations are derived. Thus deluded by his fallacious imagination the necessary precautions are neglected and the disease so firmly entrenched as to frequently baffle the skill of our profession!

So general indeed are liver complaints and so deceptive in their appearance, that I am persuaded this organ is frequently involved unnoticed by either practitioners or patients, and inconsequence of the variety of symptoms presented and its disposition to assume the form of so many different diseases, it is often mistaken for some one to which it has no relation.

The most effectual method of guarding against such mistakes, is an attention strictly directed to the symptoms generally presented, particularly the alvine secretions, which if properly attended to will in a majority of cases give a correct decision.

The Symptoms are generally slightly felt by the patients and often after a continuance for sometime

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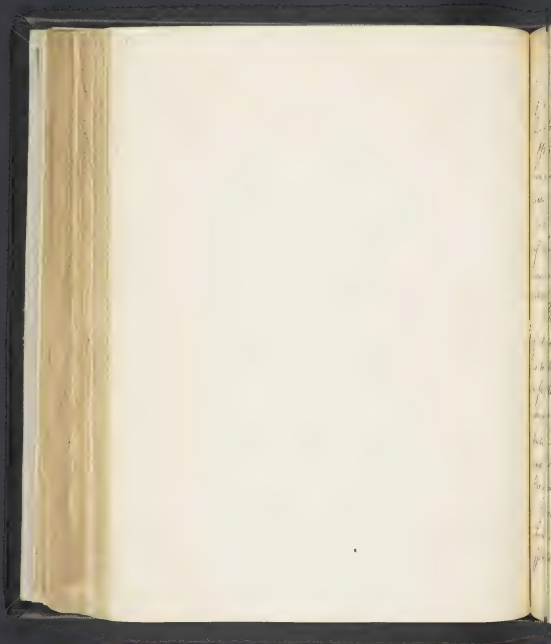
are more prominently disclosed by a disagreeable sense of  
fulness after eating, accompanied by an oppression  
or soreness in the epigastric region, followed by a  
disposition to drowsiness. The skin becomes dry, with  
much accumulation of heat, the complexion is sallow,  
streaked light denoting a deficiency of bile accompanied  
with much flatulence. Urine high coloured, deficient  
in quantity, often depositing a pink or mucous sedi-  
ment at other times it is more copious and liquid in its  
consistence. The patient feels a considerable languor  
and vacuity at the pit of the stomach, succeeded by a  
disposition to sleep, which is seldom of a refreshing  
nature, interrupted by distressing dreams leaving an alarm  
when he awakes, which no visible circumstances seems  
to justify. Pain is occasionally felt, which is acute  
or obtuse and heavy, it is most usually in the right side &  
consequently the patient lies most comfortably on it. The pulse  
varies much in its frequency, sometimes hard and chorded,  
at others small and frequent with frequent intermis-  
sions, which is ascribed to a redundancy of bile in the  
hepatic duct, an obstruction of blood in the hepatic artery

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or by an accumulation of it in the venae portae produced by an enlargement of the substance of the organ.

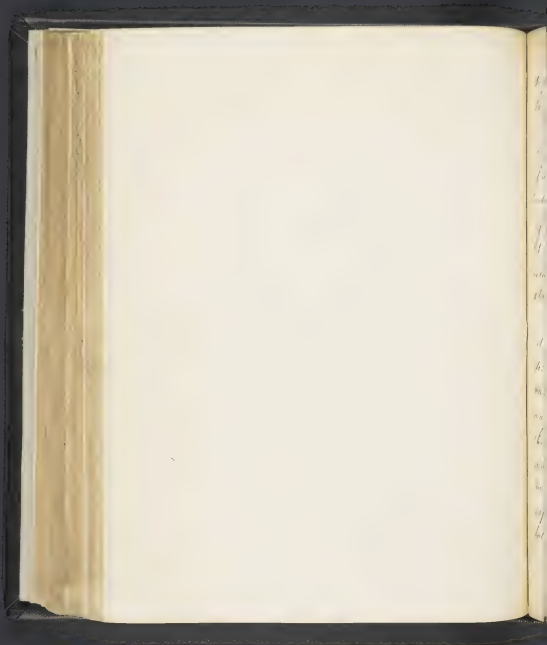
Dejection of spirits is a general concomitant of the patient at this stage of the disease, so much so that the most frivolous circumstances are elevated to the most momentous dangers, and trifles light as the air he sees his are transfigured into masters of the most hideous characters. The bowels never perform their office by throwing off a quantity proportional to the quantity <sup>of food</sup> taken in. The <sup>stools</sup> ~~stools~~ <sup>stools</sup> are <sup>either</sup> ~~either~~ <sup>either</sup> sometimes diminished at others increased in a preternatural degree. The thirst is generally natural, tongue furred most commonly at the base with a white or yellowish coat. In many cases there is a pain in the right side extending to the right shoulder and down the vertebral column where a gnawing or aching sensation is experienced, with a fulness in the side and vacuity at the top of the stomach which produces great uneasiness and distress. The extremities are edematous with a want of motion in the joints showing a vitiate quality of the lubricating fluids which renders them unfit



the facility of motion required. After the patient has for a length of time been suffering under the afflicting power of this disease, a general emaciation is one of its most prominent characteristics. Finally the disease is not unfrequently accompanied by such as enlargement of the liver and "derangement of its functions; terminating in a hollow dry cough without expectorations in asthma, Hydropneumothorax, Hydatidæ, &c.

These symptoms notwithstanding the insidiousness of the disease, are often so insidious in their attack as to pass almost entirely unnoticed by either physicians or patients, while examinations after death have plainly shown the liver to be slightly increased, which in the patients life time produced but little inconvenience, and which must have doubtless been the result of previous inflammation.

From the striking resemblance of these symptoms to those involving the lungs, and to other inflammatory affections of the chest, they are commonly mistaken,

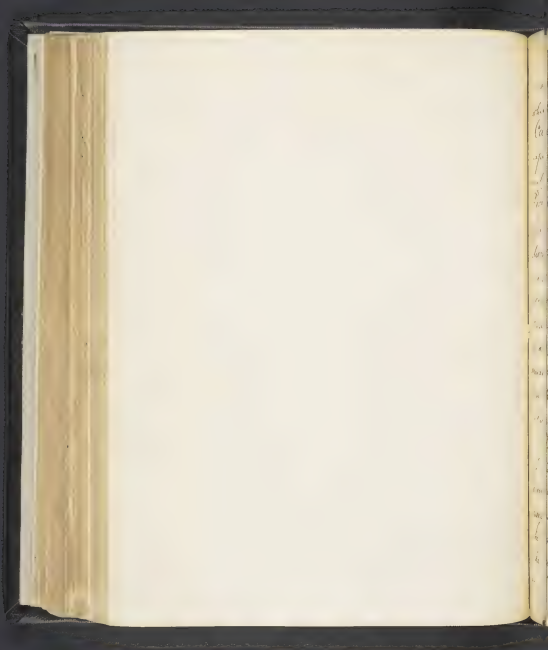


to mislead the instructor and to satisfy the student, may  
be a great mistake, and a source of complaint.

The next lesson is on the examination of the liver.  
It is an experienced practitioner  
if we have no time to direct us in external and  
internal examination, instruction and enlargement  
of the liver. The next is an experienced teacher, then  
it is a repetition of examination to satisfy oneself  
relative to the difference between a hard and a diseased  
state of the organ.

To facilitate an examination  
it should be observed that when the diaphragm  
descends the liver is carried downwards, and when it is  
carried in a contrary direction it is covered by the  
margin of the ribs or chest. Hence you should place  
the patient on his back with his head drawn forwards  
and hands at right angles with his body, in order to relax  
his abdominal muscles, then direct him to make a deep  
inspiration, at this time the examination should be made  
following the margin of the ribs with the fingers.

The liver is sometimes found enlarged sometimes diminished

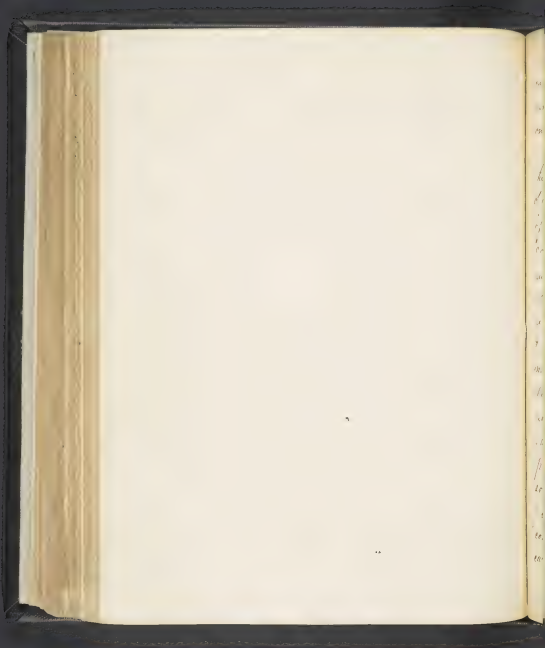




at other enlarged without any alteration of structure, which happens in recent congestion.

**Causes.** The causes of chronic hepatitis are long exposure to heat or cold, marsh miasmas, the Inter-mittent or re-mittent fevers, Drunkenness. It is says Professor Chapman frequently brought on by extravagant use of mercury, in venereal, leuc, and other disorders producing a great excitement of the liver and it is a law of the animal economy that a correspondent collapse will follow a protracted natural excitement. Hence in obedience to that law when the liver is immediately excited by mercury that a correspondent collapse must necessarily follow, which produces a great circulation through the vena portarum giving rise to congestion, enlargement and induration of the organ.

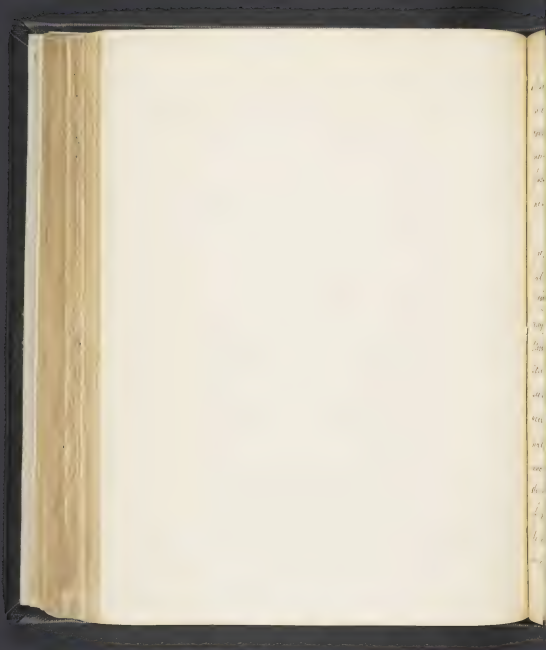
The degrees to which the liver may arrive in point of disease are varied from congestion to induration & even destruction, besides being filled with chole-  
rous, or fatty matter. An eminent writer relates the case of a gentleman in Bengal whose liver presented the appearance of a corroded preparation having



may the structures. Johnson speaks of many remarkable cases which came under his observation one was so much enlarged as to reach the pules.

Indeed so intimately connected are all the abdominal viscera, that their motions entirely depend on each other and also unite the performance of the functions peculiar to each in such intimate connection, that the disturbance of one necessarily produces a correspondent alteration in the others.

This is strikingly exemplified in a case which receives its blood from the Stomach, Intestines, Pancreas & Spleen. Hence any abdominal organ being diseased materially affects the condition of the liver, and this derangement may be a cause of Hepatic disease. Thus situated it is of importance to know whether any existing disease of the liver is a primary or secondary affection arising from some distant abdominal organ. This is accomplished by a strict attention to the variety of complicated bilious complaints, which call for careful discrimination on the part of the practitioner.



A sudden repulsion of blood from the surface to the internal organs, necessarily increases congestion by over distending the vessels in their debilitated and morbid conditions at a period too, when they do not possess energy sufficient for the restoration of their healthy action.

Chronic Hepatitis is slow in its progress, and deceptive in its appearances creeping on with undermining rapidity without the patient being aware of its existence, or occasionally without any characteristic to induce even the Physician to think the ailments of the individual arise from this source. Hence every correspondence will consider such a disease of primary importance, and perceive the necessity of assiduously enquiring into its nature, in order that it may be known when it exists, and the means to eradicate it be conducted with discrimination and propriety. Nature in all cases should not be frustrated by rashness and interferences, with so much to combat and disperse impressions, and should be assisted with gentleness in her exertions.



In hepatic constitutions, securing a free passage to be attended to is the source of the disease, a knowledge of which is acquired by an attentive examination of the secretions that pass by the stomach & intestines, to which every medical man should be familiar of himself; it is required time and observation to make him become acquainted with the varieties presented in bilious secretions. When there is an accumulation of bile in the great blood vessels of the liver, and necessity of ease on the large blood vessels of the abdomen, obstructing the circulation & the circulation of the blood, the patient is then, who always feels in his, with a sense of oppression, not only the effects of a pinched in the abdomen, but also a sense of fullness, not only in the abdomen, but also in the pelvis of the bladder and rectum of the rectum.

In conducting the treatment of this morbid condition of the organ, our remedies should be accommodated to the progress of the complaint. Hepatitis in this country is divided into 2 stages. First, that of a simple derangement of the functions of the glands, second





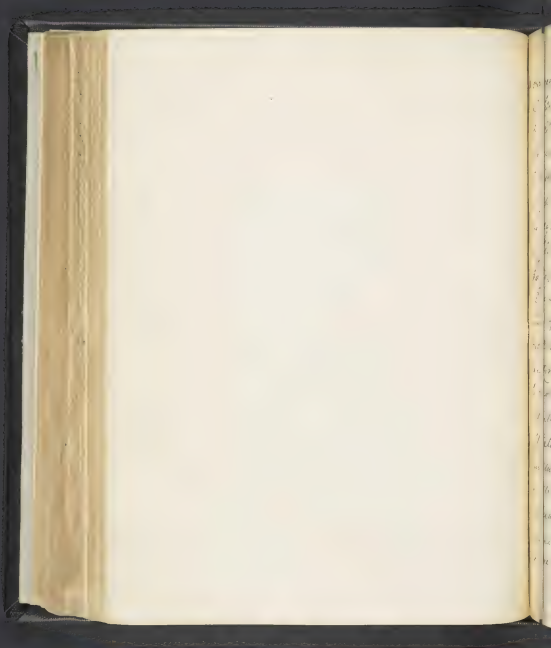
In actual change in the organization of the organs  
 of the stomach. The first object is to produce free action  
 in the stomach and intestines, by which the liver firm  
 to intimate connexion will be materially improved.  
 Giving due regard to the relations of balance  
 which equally influences the surface and general  
 circulation for the accomplishment of which it  
 is requisite to attend that from the arm by men  
 unrepeated bleedings or cupping, leeching, in the  
 vicinity of the head and neck. One should be  
 careful to properly emulging the biliary vessels and procuring  
 regular urine evacuations which is more readily  
 effected by Calomel than other medicines.

The London Taraxacum or Dandelion is spoken of  
 as having been used with success in this complaint  
 given in the dose of a table spoonful of the expressed  
 juice when green. But Professor Chapman is a remedy  
 more worthy of confidence a course of Mercury which  
 should never be extended to a profuse salivation  
 as has been injudiciously recommended by some  
 authors on the subject. The oblong the most sensitive  
 is recommended.



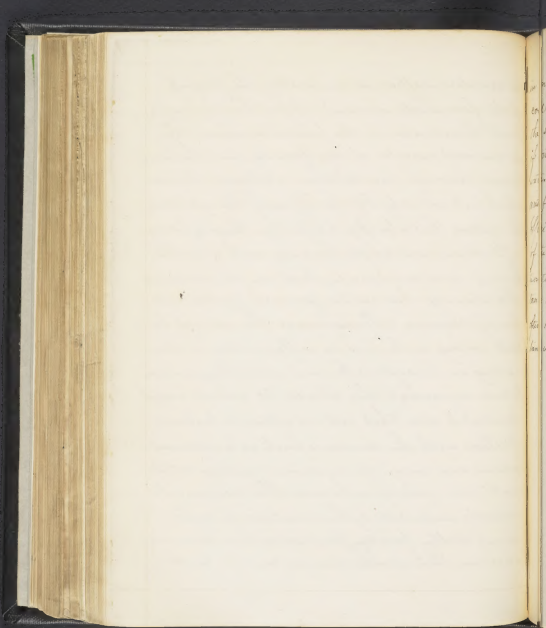
& mercury, calomel is what I did give. He likes  
 milk should be given a small quantity <sup>and</sup> the more I  
 made tender and it should not be mixed with  
~~the~~ The impression should be retained for some  
 weeks as circumstances may demand. But the  
 view of producing a change of existence from  
 the diseased part as the body is long from the surface  
 in its lengthened. The long, & long, it seems, the  
 requires a continuation he became pale & early when  
 he went to bed at night of great rest. His mouth  
 is so sensitive as to spring it to be too long, & he has  
 during a certain measure as it creates a new, or  
 the determination of the surface. I've Mercurial  
 & it is a matter of it a remedy of some. I've  
 in a certain time in the & I've  
 in an extreme. I've  
 until the inflammation is over.

I wish to see the patient still out  
 to have a continuation of the & I've  
 continuation with the strictest & I've  
 in the part of the patient, & I've



our remedies ineffectual in arresting the progress of this formidable malady. After having recourse to all the remedies in our power it is advised by an eminent member of our faculty for the patient to visit some of our sulphur watering places which act not only by the effects of the water on the system, but also by dispelling those gloomy reflections, and apprehensions, with which the patient is so universally beset in this disease.

The springs best suited for such diseases are those of Virginia & Pennsylvania. This should be tried so long as there is no inflammatory action existing in the system. In such cases they uniformly prove injurious, to this should be added strict attention to diet. That best adapted to patients afflicted with this disease is such as is attenuant, nutritive, and easy of digestion, avoiding salted meats and greasy substances. This diet may be gradually improved by the addition of light animal broths, poultry, Mutton or veal, so dressed as to retain their nutritious juices, ripe fruits



in moderate quantities Vegetables of a crude cold nature which are liable to acidify on the stomach should be carefully avoided if wine is indulged in it should be diluted with water. Malt liquors seldom agree with the patient and for the most part should be laid aside. Spirituous liquors should be avoided as productive of the most deleterious consequences. A strict attention to the above precautions is of primary importance and if duly attended to by the patient will often reward him for his abstinence and crown him with a revival of health.

